

Environmental Justice Policy
California State Lands Commission

Mission Statement: *The California State Lands Commission serves the people of California by providing stewardship of the lands, waterways, and resources entrusted to its care through economic development, protection, preservation, and restoration.*

Commission Jurisdiction/Programs

The California State Lands Commission (Commission) holds title to and manages four million acres of tide and submerged land underlying the State's navigable and tidal waterways. These lands are held under and governed by the provisions of the Public Trust Doctrine for specific public purposes such as fishing, water dependent commerce, navigation, ecological preservation, and scientific study, among others. The Public Trust Doctrine governs the management of such lands held by the State, or its delegated trustees, for the benefit of all of the people.

The Commission also holds title to and manages about 570,000 acres of State School Lands. The school lands are held in trust for the betterment of the common schools of the State and the revenue, by statute, goes to support the State Teachers Retirement System. The school lands must be administered for the benefit of the public.

The Commission grants leases and permits on State lands for such purposes as, but not limited to, marinas, industrial wharves, tanker anchorages, timber harvesting, dredging, grazing, mining, oil and gas, and geothermal development. The Commission has regulatory authority over all marine oil facilities and terminals in the State.

The Commission also administers programs to remove hazardous artificial structures from waterways that pose a risk to public health and safety and participates in projects and programs to preserve, enhance, and restore natural resources.

In the performance of its duties, the Commission frequently makes land use and permitting decisions, produces regulations, and takes other discretionary actions that may have an impact on the environment and human health.

Environmental Justice Policy

The Commission pledges to continue and enhance its processes, decisions, and programs with environmental justice as an essential consideration. Environmental justice is defined by State law as "the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies." This definition is consistent with the Public Trust Doctrine principle that the management of trust lands is for the benefit of all of the people.

The Commission stresses fair treatment of all members of the public in its everyday activities, processes, decision-making, and regulatory affairs. The Commission has earned a reputation for unbiased and balanced decisions concerning uses of public lands and resources. The Commission reaffirms its commitment to an informed and open process in which all people are treated equitably and with dignity and in which its decisions are tempered by environmental justice considerations. The Commission will communicate this policy to the cities, counties, and harbor districts that manage lands granted to them by the Legislature and for which the Commission retains oversight.

The Commission pledges to continue and enhance its processes, decisions, and programs with environmental justice as an essential consideration by:

1. Identifying relevant populations that might be adversely affected by Commission programs or by projects submitted by outside parties for its consideration.
2. Seeking out community groups and leaders to encourage communication and collaboration with the Commission and its staff.
3. Distributing public information as broadly as possible and in multiple languages, as needed, to encourage participation in the Commission's public processes.
4. Incorporating consultations with affected community groups and leaders while preparing environmental analyses of projects submitted to the Commission for its consideration.
5. Ensuring that public documents and notices relating to human health or environmental issues are concise, understandable, and readily accessible to the public, in multiple languages, as needed.
6. Holding public meetings, public hearings, and public workshops at times and in locations that encourage meaningful public involvement by members of the affected communities.
7. Educating present and future generations in all walks of life about public access to lands and resources managed by the Commission.
8. Ensuring that a range of reasonable alternatives is identified when siting facilities that may adversely affect relevant populations and identifying, for the Commission's consideration, those that would minimize or eliminate environmental impacts affecting such populations.
9. Working in conjunction with federal, state, regional, and local agencies to ensure consideration of disproportionate impacts on relevant populations, by instant or cumulative environmental pollution or degradation.

10. Fostering research and data collection to better define cumulative sources of pollution, exposures, risks, and impacts.
11. Providing appropriate training on environmental justice issues to staff and the Commission so that recognition and consideration of such issues are incorporated into its daily activities.
12. Reporting periodically to the Commission on how environmental justice is a part of the programs, processes, and activities conducted by the Commission and proposing modifications as necessary.

This policy shall be reviewed annually by staff to evaluate its effectiveness in achieving environmental justice in the Commission's management of the lands and resources within its jurisdiction.

